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Daiichi Sankyo Company Limited has signed a license agreement with UK-based Cell Therapy Ltd for an exclusive license in Japan to develop and market Heartcel, a immune-modulatory progenitor (iMP) cell therapeutic agent for ischemic heart failure currently in development.

Heartcel is an allogeneic iMP cell therapeutic agent created using a new CTL proprietary method. Heartcel is to be injected into the cardiac muscle for expected therapeutic effects in patients suffering from ischemic heart failure.

In Japan, Daiichi Sankyo will develop and market Heartcel, while CTL will maintain manufacturing responsibilities for clinical trials and commercialization. Daiichi Sankyo will make a lump-sum payment to CTL on the signing of the agreement, followed by future milestone and sales royalty payments.

Heartcel is derived from somatic stem cells isolated from healthy individuals which, based on cultivation under the certain conditions, have been modified to show a treatment effect on cardiac disorders. Moreover, unlike iPS cells, gene transfers do not take place. Cell therapeutic agents are classified into autologous cell therapeutic agents, which are processed and cultured from the patient's own cells, and allogeneic cell therapy agents, which are processed, cultivated and stored from another donor's cells.